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ABSTRACT

Marble games, or pitch, are among the most widely played of traditional boys' games in Trinidad and Tobago and have declined in the last two decades. Nearly 200 marbles terms found in Trinidad and Tobago English Creole are documented. Although most are British in origin, there are East Indian, French Creole, and possible African influences on this lexicon. An analysis of the discourse of marbles talk in its sociocultural context was prompted by its strong positive affect for men who played pitch as boys. Using frameworks from the sociology of games and from studies in language and gender, marbles talk is shown to demonstrate features of masculine gender-linked use of language and games, including highly elaborated rules and strategies, and competitive and confrontational use of language. (Contains 27 references.) (Author/JP)

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"Right-throughs, Rings, and Taws:" Marbles Pitching Terminology in Trinidad and Tobago

Lise Winer and Hans E.A. Boos

Marble games, or *pitch*, perhaps the most widely played of all traditional boys' games in Trinidad and Tobago, have declined precipitously in the last two decades. This paper documents close to 200 marbles terms found in Trinidad and Tobago English Creole. Although most are British in origin, there are East Indian, French Creole, and possible African influences on this lexicon. An analysis of the discourse of marbles talk in its sociocultural context was prompted by its strong positive affect for men who played pitch as boys. Using frameworks from the sociology of games and from studies in language and gender, marbles talk is shown to demonstrate features of masculine gender-linked use of language and games, including highly elaborated rules and strategies, and competitive and confrontational use of language.

Marble games, generally known as *pitch*, used to be perhaps the most widely played of all traditional boys' games played in Trinidad and Tobago (T&T). In recent years, however, marble playing has declined in popularity, and the games and their rich vocabulary are dying out. The purpose of this paper is to discuss terms associated with marbles in T&T, and to assess their socio-cultural importance, particularly as part of socialization into gender-related styles of discourse.

Marble terms in T&T were gathered as part of work on a historical dictionary of the English/Creole of T&T (Winer, in preparation), and come from several sources: (a) an extensive local survey (Ashby, 1981) based on oral interviews throughout Trinidad and across age groups; (b) a segment on marble pitching from "Gayelle," a local magazine-type television program (Banyan, 1985); (c) novels, poems, and memoirs of childhood (Araujo, 1984; Inniss, 1910, 1932; Keens-Douglas, 1975; McDonald, 1969; Narine, 1979; Pires, 1991); (d) the extensive personal experience of one of the authors (Boos) as a native Trinidadian marbles player; (e) written and telephone responses to a request for information in local newspapers; and (f) a number of oral interviews in Trinidad and Tobago with men mostly between the ages of 50 and 75. (Unattributed quotations in the text are from these latter three sources.) Although there is no claim for completeness of this marble lexicon, it seems unlikely that there will be a significant number of additions.

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Marble vocabulary has received considerable attention in England and the United States (e.g., Cassidy, 1958; Combs, 1955; Ferretti, 1973; Harder, 1955; Sackett, 1962). Researchers have all found heavy attrition in modern marble playing and terminology:

> This picturesque slang has many dozens of terms used nowhere else in any language. Phrases like *fen sidings*, *dubs*, and *tribs* ... were known and used by American children during the late 19th and early 20th century, but have since largely faded from usage. (Randall & Webb, 1988, p. 7)

This is certainly true for T&T, often making it impossible to determine the precise definition or distribution of a term:

> With the disappearance of such marbles as "kodens", "kiaws", and "bone agates" these terms are known only by the older speakers and are no longer used since their referents are not used. (Ashby, 1981, p. 7)

Marble terms vary to some extent by locality and by generation. The most important regional difference in T&T appears to be between *South*—the area right in and around San Fernando—and the rest of the country, including Tobago. (No attempt is made here to denote regional usage differences systematically.)

Marble History

Small balls, usually about a half inch in diameter, made of clay, stone, ceramic or glass, are one of the oldest and most widespread games in the world. Their origin is prehistoric—clay and stone marbles have been found in caves in Europe, in burial mounds of Indians in Mississippi, and in China. Throughout Africa, small stones are tossed rapidly and successively into a series of holes. In Europe, marbles are known from a 14th century French manuscript, and an English game from at least 1450 (Randall & Webb, 1988, p. 9). Marbles came to colonial North America with the British, French, and Dutch (Randall & Webb, 1988, p. 9). The pervasive British influence on marbles playing in T&T doubtless first came with the children of the British planters and other colonists.

In modern times, Germany was virtually the only major manufacturer of stone and glass marbles until about 1900, when glass marbles were produced in quantity in the U.S. (Ferretti, 1973, p. 32). Machine-made marbles were dominant by the 1920s, but by the late 1930s, demand was beginning to slow down; foreign imports again appeared in the early 1950s, with the Japanese Cat Eye marble (Randall & Webb, 1988, p. 10).

Adult collectors have a strong interest in marbles; rare specimens can trade for thousands of dollars apiece in the U.S. (Dickson, 1988, pp. 101–102; Randall & Webb, 1988). But many older players have lamented the decline in true popularity of marbles, as well as other traditional children's games (e.g., Cassidy, 1958, pp.

19–22). Despite official tournaments organized in the United States, for example, Ferretti (1973) notes that "the spontaneous, unsupervised, catch-as-catch-can marbles games we once played exist only in our memories" (p. 23).

Marbles were popular partly because of their relatively low cost, and because games are easily set up, taking into account local circumstances—from rough pavements to snow banks (Ferretti, 1973, pp. 80–81, 129). An Australian memoir noted that in the 1860s, "the footpaths belonged to the small boys as much as to the city council, and they had no compunction in digging their 'nuck' holes wherever they wanted to play" (Verco, quoted in Ferretti 1973, p. 25). In T&T, as in most places, marbles games are seasonal:

> Pitching is mainly played by school-age children and like kite-playing is seasonal. During the months of January to June—the Dry Season—marbles appear to be one of the more common games played. (Ashby, 1988, p. 11)

Types of Marbles

Some names for marbles indicate their particular function in a game. Perhaps the oldest and most consistently known term is *taw* (*tor*) 'large or choice marble used to shoot at other marbles, rarely parted with or betted' (< English idem.). Any marble in the ring is a *dooz* (?< Trinidad and Tobago English Creole *doos* < French Creole 'sweet, easy'). A chipped marble is a *falsy* (< E *false*); no terms were found to indicate deliberate roughening of the marble's surface.

The targets and items played for can be marbles, or other items. Often used were shiny black *tambran* 'tamarind' seeds, *jumbie beads* or *crab eyes*—the bright red and black seeds of *Abrus precatorius*, and *soap seed*—the soapy hard round seed of *Sapindus saponaria*; *cogs* or *crown corks* 'cork liners' from bottles of *sweet drink* 'carbonated soft drink,' beer, etc.; small smooth round river stones; and buttons. The commonest of these were *khakis*, khaki-colored buttons taken from shirts or the flies of the pre-zipper khaki short pants worn by school boys:

> In a circle drawn in the dust were scattered white, blue, and red buttons. Anybody knocking a button out of the ring with his marble could keep that button. For the village boys buttons were as precious as coins ... As I came up I saw a fellow hit a mother-of-pearl button, worth five 'khakis', out of the ring from over a yard away ... They all had their eye on a gilt button lying right in the centre, half-covered by dust ... it was worth at least a dozen 'Khakis.' (McDonald, 1969, pp. 70–71)

Even if buttons or stones were used as targets, the taw was always some type of marble or ball-bearing:

> He was using a keow. One of his opponents was using a shiny steel ball-bearing and the other a white crystal taken from an old soda-water bottle. (McDonald, 1969, pp. 71)

Names for types of marbles based on physical characteristics may be applied to different marbles in different areas or by different generations of children (Randall & Webb, 1988, p. 7). Plain or painted clay marbles are the most basic and widespread of traditional marbles, their long-lived popularity probably due to their low cost. The most common "real" marble in T&T was the *koden*, made from the local *white clay* (actually grey) and fired in a kiln. These were brittle, and broke easily, but were cheap: "A shop on Erthig Road which sold marbles would let us have ten codens and two agates for the six cents" (Araujo, 1984, reminiscing about the 1930s). Sometimes boys tried to pass off a koden as a more valuable *keeow* (see below) by rubbing it carefully in dry laundry blue or on a blue copybook cover. Poorer children might be scorned for playing with such low-status materials:

> Boy, where yuh learn to play marble? dis is town yu know, We play with no river stone, No cudden neither. Is strictly glassy, agate, keeow. (Keens-Douglas, 1975, p. 43)

In the old days, glass marbles could sometimes be obtained from marble-stoppered bottles (Ingram, 1972, p. 19)[1], as in this passage about the 1930s:

> Whenever we got our hands on a sweet drink bottle ... we would break it ... and extract the glass ball, which then became your crystal taw. The only problem with them was that when your opponent was using an iron taw, you had to "chinks" a lot out of his way, since a fiercely pitched iron taw could shatter a "crystal." (Araujo, 1984)

These *crystals*, also known as *water crystals*, were usually clear or light-green in color. In the post-World War II period, imported crystals, somewhat larger, in different colors but usually clear and transparent with a green tinge, became available. They were sometimes called *cent* or *penny* marbles from their price.

Steel ball bearings about 1.5cm in diameter became popular as taws in the U.S. and T&T during World War II.[2] They are known as *balls bearing*, *doodle* (?< E 'to deceive'), *doogle* (?< E *doodle*, or *doogs* 'number of marbles risked in a game'), *google*, *iron doodle*, *iron doogle*, *iron google*, *iron tetay* (?< FC *tete* 'woman's breast'), *ironise*, *slug*, and *slugs*. They are often favored by poorer pitchers because of their blasting power (Ferretti, 1973, p. 106); they are unbreakable and dangerous:

> Partner, we dont play with no doogle, Dat is not real marble, Dat is balls-bearing ... Yu want to mash up people taw? (Keens-Douglas, 1975, p. 44)

> The crystal ... [was] easy prey for the 'iron googles' (or wheel bearing slugs) that were used by the more aggressive players who often time broke up (smashed) your gentler marbles.

Many of the marble types and terms widely known in the U.S. appear to have had virtually no use in T&T. An *agate* in T&T is usually purple-blue or spotty blue in color. It is never called *aggie*, as in the U.S. and U.K., where *agates* or *aggies* are made from semi-precious agate stone of layered colors, usually browns and reds. Many of the more common U.S. marbles such as *swirls* and *slags* (Ingram, 1972), or less common ones such as *sulphides* (with figures inside) or comic picture marbles, appear to be unknown, labeled quite differently, or minimal modern imports.

Most T&T names for marble types are derived from English and TEC words. There is strikingly little U.S. influence, and such common terms as *alleys* and *commies* are not used. Local terms include *glassy*, an opaque white glass or porcelain-like marble with patches or streaks of color in it; *crystal agate* or *Chinee agate*, a clear marble with two or three stripes in the center; and *snake eye*, or more commonly *veiny*, an opaque glassy porcelain marble, white or shell-pink in color, with thin veins of color running through it. The common modern marble known elsewhere as *cat's eye*—clear glass with color blades inside—is called locally a *cherry-seed crystal*, from its resemblance to the flanged seed of the West Indian cherry, *Malpighia punicifolia*.

Keeow (*keow*, *kiaow*) (?< French *caillou* 'pebble') usually refers either to a white opaque glass or porcelain marble with red or blue design. A *big-keeow* is a matte grey marble with a blue streak. A *keke* [keke] is a solid white marble. Ashby (1981, p. 14) describes *bone agates* as marbles of opaque colors, sometimes variegated. The *big mook* [mUk] (TEC *mook* 'solid blow or hit') or *big-goonks* (*big unks*) (cf. U.S. *goonger* 'an especially big marble' Cassidy, 1958, p. 34) is a larger than normal glass marble, bigger than a crystal, about 3cm in diameter, usually milky-white, opaque, with streaks of color in the outer surface. A less common term, possibly fairly recent, is *jacks-eye* (?< TEC *jacks*, several species of fish, or ?< E *one-eyed jacks*, in cards) for a very small, solid, colored marble, like those used for Chinese checkers.

As elsewhere (Gomme, 1894, p. I:364; Ferretti, 1973, p. 50), different types of marbles have relative values for trading or compensation. In T&T, for example, a keeow might be worth two kekes, or two or three crystals, depending on size. Such values fluctuate with availability of marbles and funds, and local traditions.

Types of Marbles Games

The general term for any marbles game is *pitch*, as in "Dey playin pitch in de road." The origin of this term is probably English *pitch* 'to throw so as to fall in or near a definite place,' although to *pitch* is not a throw or toss, but a forceful moving of the marble, held in the crook of the forefinger, propelling it forward by strongly

and sharply flicking the thumb against it. The name for the game may also be related to or convergent with the very common and long-standing Trinidad and Tobago English Creole *pitch* 'asphalt.'

> Some of the better games were played on the 'pitched' areas of schoolyards and roadways. The pitch would get soft in the hot sun, and a hole could be made by spinning on a heel to make a depression for each hole, and rings or bounce could easily be scribed in the soft pitch. It was due to this smooth pitching surface that the ability to 'spin' the marble to control its roll and to make it circle a hole was needed to win. Also back spin could allow you to hit an opponent and reverse direction to 'pot' the desired hole.

Marble games are sometimes identified according to the item played for, as in *ups kabat*, in which jumbie beads are used (Ashby, 1981, p. 23); *button win*, in which buttons are targets and are won or lost; and *kaks for bokee*, in which players place their marbles at random; each player then tries to hit another's marble, and the player whose marble is hit gets a bokee penalty (see below).

However, games are generally called a specific name according to configuration, as in "Leh we play rings." Marble games comprise several types:

> chase games in which two or more players alternately shoot at each other along a makeshift meandering course; enclosure games in which marbles are shot at other marbles contained within a marked-off area; and hole games in which marbles are shot or bowled into a successive series of holes. (Ferretti, 1973, p. 21)

There are also "bounce" games, in which the taw is shot directly or indirectly at one marble, without any other defining elements, and racing games in which competitors' marbles leave the starting line at the same time. The following game types are found in T&T (other cited terms are explained below).[3]

Chase Games

Chase is a game usually played on the way home from school. Each pitch is aimed at the direction of home, thus allowing slow progress home as players follow the marbles, stopping to pitch from the end of each roll. There is generally no penalty, the game's purpose being to "sharpen your skills, to show off, and to go home slowly."

Enclosure Games

All such games in T&T are played in a fairly small ring and/or in relation to one line or two parallel lines. *Rings* is always played with a ring about 18 inches in diameter. Usually, each player puts two marbles (or buttons) into the ring, and with the taw tries to knock them out of the ring, when they are then kept. When there is only one marble left in the ring, and the shooter is sure to get it, he need not shoot, but just place a second marble in the ring as his *ante*. The other players

ante-up by putting in two marbles, and another game starts. In rings, you must knock out a marble and your taw must also leave the ring but remain close to the line to be in position to knock another out. Four or five can play, each player betting one or two marbles each, and keeping what he wins. Competition in rings, almost always played *for self* 'to keep winnings,' is usually intense:

> All three [boys] were fiercely in earnest. The best object in the game was to hit an opponent's marble because then all the buttons left in the ring came to that marksman. (McDonald, 1969, p. 71)

Nearest line is played two main ways. In the first, two lines are drawn some four or five meters apart. (The rules established before the game only apply to the area between the two lines.) Marbles are *beaded* on the second line, with the players trying to hit the targets by throwing from the *bounce*. In the second variant, only one line is drawn, with players trying to *bead* their marbles by *bouncing*.

Lerkee (Narine, 1979, p. 9) is a type of rings, but is unusual in two respects. First, it is the only term which seems to be clearly Indian in origin. Second, although it can be played by individuals, it is the only marbles game regularly played with partners or sides. A side, usually consisting of four players, arranges their marbles in the ring and designates players on the other side to target each marble (the weakest players are required to make the most difficult shots).

Hole Games

Holes are smoothed out in the ground by turning on your heel. Games with more than one hole always have them arranged in a straight line, about 18–24 inches apart. In *one-hole*, marbles are played from the starting line or the last play position to the single hole. Each potting of the hole is scored at 10 points and the first player to reach 100 wins.

Three-hole and *Seven-hole* are variants of the same game. Three holes are smoothed out in the ground, by turning on your heel, about 18–24 inches apart. Hole 3 is at the bounce, followed at intervals—usually a *pace*—by hole 2 and hole 1. The sequence must be completed by potting holes in order: 1-2-3 for three-hole, and 1-2-3-2-1-2-3 for seven-hole. The potting of the last hole makes a winner. If a player misses a hole, he relinquishes his turn. If a marble goes into the wrong hole, out of sequence, the player loses the game. In seven-hole, the direction of play is referred to as *going up* (3-2-1) or *going down* (1-2-3).

Hundred-hole is a type of three-hole in which the first player to make 100 points wins. A player gets 10 points for potting a hole (i.e., getting the marble into it), or for hitting an opponent's marble. To win, hole 3 must be potted to make 100. If you miss this hole and go over the bounce, you get 100, but if the next player pots the hole for his 100, he wins, even though you got to 100 "first."

In his reminiscences of the 1840s, Innis (1910, p. 84; 1932, p. 26) describes *bloché*, called *blochay* or *bloshay* in Trinidad and *zip-zap-zabat* in Tobago. It is often played with cashew nuts, although marbles may be used. A hole is made, usually in the ground but sometimes in a tree or wall. One player holds two nuts and requests two more, then throws them in the hole. If all go in he wins; if two go in and two out he also wins. If three go in and one doesn't he loses. With more than four, they must be all in, or even in and even out, for a win; an odd number loses. The manner of the game—throwing things into holes—may be more commonly African than European; the name *bloshay* may be French Creole derived from French *bloquer* 'to fill holes in a wall' or an (as yet undetermined) Latin American Spanish game.

Bounce Games

Bounce and ex is a game in which you pitch your marble against a wall, making it bounce back to fall within an *ex* (hand-span) of the opponent's marble in order to win it.

Zopanex involves placing a marble on the ground and dropping or pitching another marble onto it from a high *ups* in order to capture or smash the marble on the ground.

Race Games

Racing marble can only be played where there are hilly roads, as in San Fernando. Marbles are lined up at a starting position, usually in a dry drain, and allowed to roll downhill to see which one reaches a given target first or goes farther.

Games Set-ups, Rules, Tactics, Evaluations, and Penalties

Marbles games are often highly localized in nature: "One man's rules are another's discards, and structure in Surrey is ridiculous in Wheeling" (Ferretti, 1973, p. 56). In T &T, boys who spent holidays with relatives, or moved from one area to another, frequently found their normal plays ridiculed or disallowed. Although there are widely accepted conventions of marble play—for example that a player who fails to achieve his objective of either potting a hole or hitting another player's marble must yield his turn—complexity and potential conflict between different rules, and choice of whether or not certain rules are invoked, mean that the rules themselves can become a central part of the game: "Much of the effort in [U.S.] marbles games is devoted to making up and enforcing the ad hoc regulations for the various games" (Ferretti, 1973, p. 63).

There is little negotiation of rules amongst players who regularly play together, although an individual play might provoke a rule citation, sometimes argument. Nonetheless, particularly with new players, much of the conversation during games revolves around elaborate rules, including recapitulations and explanations:

> No ups, no downs, no chinks in holes, no fens, and you're allowed the normal game, you can fats, you go back to bounds, if you get dab you go back to bounds and you remain in the game. Your share in the ring is three, and if you dab or shut a man, you would entitle to take out three marbles out of the ring. (Banyan, 1985)

> Yu self ehn hear me say fen-hikes an no everys? An wha yu brushing dat dust for, Yu ehn hear me say fen-brush? (Keens-Douglas, 1975, p. 44)

> If your marble could knock my marble out of the hole I did chinks it then the game is digs-een digs-out ... I digs een my marble, you have to digs it out.

Foreseeing opponents' possible strategies and establishing dominance of your own rules before others put you at a disadvantage is crucial, and a quick eye for strategic tactics is essential.[4]

> It required good tactics to get close to the ring yet avoid coming too near to an enemy's marble. The three played warily, judging angles and distances. (McDonald, 1969, p. 71)

> In my old neighborhood in Yonkers, New York, a marbler had about a dozen prescriptive shouts he could use, and a fast lip was almost as important as a skilled thumb. (Dickson, 1988, p. 97)

Quite often one boy, an older player, is tacitly given the role of judge, based on his age, skill or experience in knowing how to interpret the rules in his turf. It is important to judge when someone has broken a rule:

> Partner yu bringsing, Like yu hand have foot, How it moving up so? (Keens-Douglas, 1975, p. 44)

> Dont hustle, yu cant butards yet, My play still, an he before yu, Yu tink country people stupid? (Keens-Douglas, 1975, p. 44)

Judgments are often contested:

> Never mind dat, yu 'fat'. How yu mean [ah] 'fat,' yu blind or wha'? De marble naturally outside de ring. (Keens-Douglas, 1975, p. 44)

> Because ah lae lae up close yuh grinding? Is not tips we playing yu know, De way all yu grow yu finger nail Tank god is not up an x, or ah bus.' (Keens-Douglas, 1975, p. 44)

During attempts to enforce rules, some bullying and *advantaging* (TEC 'taking advantage of') smaller boys may take place.

> Shut yu mout' when ah pitching, yu hear? Yu want to give me goat mout', eh? An making dumb sign eh go help allyu, Like allyu playing pard on me head. (Keens-Douglas, 1975, p. 44)

Game Set-ups

Although there is general agreement on how games are set up, there is a certain amount of flexibility about distances, etc. Players sometimes negotiate set-ups: "How come de rolls-up so far? Is ah cricket pitch allyu have here?" (Keens-Douglas, 1975, p. 44). The following section describes typical procedures and conventions of preparing for games in T&T.

ante One of the relatively few marble terms taken from adult gambling terms, and not common in T&T. It is usually used in rings; each player first puts two marbles into the ring and tries to knock them out of the ring, when they are then kept. When only one marble is left in the ring, and the pitcher is sure to get it, he need not shoot, but just place a second marble in the ring as his ante. The other players ante up by putting in two marbles each, and another game starts.

bank Depository of extra marbles not in current play.

banker Person who keeps extra marbles and gives them out on the owner's order.

beads; bounce *v* To toss or drop a marble onto the BOUNCE or starting line in order to determine the order of players. The closest to the line goes first; others follow in order of distance. If a marble is on the line, you can drop your marble on top of it to knock it off, hoping your own will be closer. In hole games the line is drawn through the diameter of one end-hole.

bombay, plumbay (TEC 'female pubic mound' ?< Timne *a-bombo* 'female pudenda, pubic region') 1: A low mound of earth on which the opponent's marble is placed so that it can be hit more easily 2: A low mound of earth or the closed fist of the non-shooting hand used to pitch from.

bounce *v* See BEADS.

bounce; bounds; bouncing line; boundary; lines *n* The starting line, the line from behind which the marble is pitched to start; the line that marks the border of the area of the game in which rules apply.

hole A small shallow hole in the ground, usually scraped out with the heel, for games like THREE-HOLE.

lines See BOUNCE *n.*

pitch *n* 1: The area of ground marbles are played on 2: Any marble game involving pitching.

pitch; play pitch; pitch marble *v* 1: To propel one's marble by placing it in the crook of the forefinger and flicking it out with the thumb 2: To play any marbles game involving pitching.

pitcher; shooter The person currently pitching.

plumbay See BOMBAY.

rings A small circle, usually about 18 inches in diameter, in which the marbles are placed in rings games.

rolls-up The distance from the BOUNCE to the RING.

shooter See PITCHER.

down taw, downs taw A command shouted to an opponent whose TAW has slipped from his hand while playing, to leave his marble on the ground and thus prevent him from re-playing, or to guarantee that his taw remains a good target.

fat, fart (< E adj. *fat* 'of a marble, remaining in the ring') *v* Of a TAW, to remain in the ring after knocking out one of the target marbles. When this happens, the player is out of the game entirely, can miss a turn, or can BUTTARDS without missing a turn.

fen slips Shouted by a player whose TAW has slipped from his hand in order to prevent someone from claiming DOWN TAW.

for keeps; for self Game in which all the marbles knocked out of the ring belong to the successful player.

for self See FOR KEEPS.

friendlies; not for self A friendly game in which players return to the original owner(s) all the marbles they have hit out of the ring.

handle taw; taw ped Shouted to a player who touches his marble before his turn. He is allowed to put one marble in the ring and return to bounce.

hops; obs (E *obstruction* or *obstacle*) Complaint that another player is obstructing play, enabling the player to PITCH again in another direction.

manos manos (TEC 'one-on-one competition, game, bet' < Spanish *mano a mano* 'hand to hand') A marble competition with only two players.

not for self See FRIENDLIES.

obs See HOPS.

play pard, play paid To cheat by cooperating with another player.

punt To stake your TAW as a guarantee when you CROAKS but wish to remain in the game. If you do not hit out a marble from the ring, you must surrender your TAW.

set (E *set up* 'stake, give amount to start up') To lend marbles to a player who is CROAKS. If the player does not win any marbles, he will have to surrender his TAW to his guarantor.

slips A misplay in which the shooting marble falls from the player's hand and the player can try to claim the right to reshoot.

taw ped See HANDLE TAW.

ten Points awarded to a player each time he pots a hole or hits his opponent's marble in hole games.

talalines (? E *taw line* 'line towards which marbles are rolled to determine order of shooting or from which marbles are shot towards the ring') *v* Of a pitched marble, to stop on the line of the circle, and therefore be out of play.

up taw, ups taw Shouted to a player who plays out of turn, possibly costing him his turn or even his game.

Claims and Advantages

dou-screw million down Shouted in a hole game, when your opponent pots the wrong hole in sequence, thereby reserving the right to knock his marble out of the hole from the rim position by as many turns as it takes. However, if your opponent can shout "ups" or "one up" before you can shout this, you have to attempt to knock his marble out of the hole with one shot from the UPS position.

downs Shouted by an opponent to ensure that you pitch from the position where your last turn left you, and that you can claim no alteration to your status.

everys Agreement reached before the start of a game establishing right of players to ask for any advantage they want, or shouted by a player before his turn to allow himself to take any move or advantage which may be of benefit to him.

falses Shouted to claim any extra marbles another player might have inadvertently placed in the ring.

fen, fain, fens, fenzen, venzen (E idem, ?< *defend*) Used in a phrase to claim the right to carry out a particular tactic or invoke the right to a rule, e.g., **fens-up** Used to ask permission to use an UPS. Also a game in which you can FEN whatever is appropriate. With *no*, e.g., *no fens-up*, it prevents a claim for that rule or maneuver.

fen-brush To reserve the right to clear away any obstacles, e.g., pebbles, in front of a marble to ensure a better chance of a hit.

fen dooskoo (*fen* + ? *dou-screw*) To claim the option to move a marble from an unfavorable position.

fen downs To opt to pitch from a DOWN or DOWNS position at a point where it is traditional to pitch from an UPS position. For example, when you have inadvertently gone across BOUNCE in the game of THREE-HOLE, you usually have to pitch from an UPS, but if you have a better chance to hit an opponent from a DOWNS you can say "fen downs" or "fen draws" to get as near as possible to the position of the opponent's marble.

fen draws To ask to move laterally, usually along the bounce line, i.e., to take a DRAWS or DOWNS.

fen everys See FEN NO FENS.

fen hike To claim the right to PITCH by resting the marble on top of your other hand, in a fist, placed on the ground, to provide a higher place to pitch from, i.e., HIKES, CUPS ON KNUCKS, UP ON KNUCKS.

fen no Used in a phrase before any advantage has the effect of disallowing it. If a player can anticipate or predict a move that his opponent may wish to make he can either shout "fen no + (specific advantage)" or "nothing" before the turn, thus not allowing the opponent to take that advantage. This can be established before the start of the game, or told to a player about to play.

fen no fens; fen everys Reserves all rights to the person saying it before someone else prohibits these rights by declaring FEN NOTHINGS.

fen ups, fenzen ups To ask for or claim the right to take an UPS, to pitch from an UPS position, when the usual position to pitch is from a DOWNS, or crouching.

knucks in Shouted to a player whose marble is in a spot where it would be awkward for the player to play, e.g., against a wall or behind an obstacle, forcing him to play in that position, preventing him from claiming the advantage of KNUCKS OUT.

knucks out, knuck out Shouted by a player immediately before his turn so that he can remove his marbles from an awkward or disadvantageous position.

leaves Called when you KAKS an opponent but want to have as many marbles to aim at as possible in the ring, so that marble is left in.

nothing, nothings Prohibits anyone from claiming any rights or advantages.

one up A prohibition to other players, from a player at a disadvantage whose marble was in the wrong hole, in order to prevent them from claiming other advantageous privileges by shouting "dou screw million down," thus the request for one up limiting the penalty to only one shot at the marble in the wrong hole.

rattles and cannon To claim points if you hit your opponent's marble more than once in one shot, due to rebounds off objects or corners, or hitting two opponents' marbles on a CANNON SHOT.

right throughs Shouted by a player before his turn allows him to keep all the marbles he has hit out of the ring, as well as claim points for any opponent's marbles which have been indirectly hit.

right-through, right throughs; rings and taws Shouted before pitching in RINGS when you intend to roll your marble through the field of play and keep anything you hit, including your opponent's TAW.

shakes mine Shouted to claim a HIT when a marble is not actually hit but did *shake* as a result of the TAW brushing away part of the BOMBAY.

stands See UPS.

up, ups; stands Advantage asked for to allow player to stand and PITCH instead of stoop as is normally done.

Tactics and Moves[5]

bitta (E *bittas* 'mark to be toed, starting point in leaping or playing') A type of extension to enable player to reposition his marble, the length from elbow to tip of little finger when the hand is spread.

braps, bramps (TEC *braps* to describe something sudden, sharp, direct, e.g. a fall or blow); **dab** (E 'to strike softly'); **zop** (sound of direct hit) *v* To hit another marble directly *n* A direct hit of one marble by another.

brings, bringzay (TEC *brings* 'to bring forward, move up) *v* To cheat by moving the shooting marble slightly forward before shooting.

bringsin, bringsing *n* Cheating by moving the shooting marble slightly forward before shooting.

brush; dust To smooth or level off ground, remove obstacles from the area where the closed hand is resting to pitch or from the shooting path, especially on rough dirt or sharp gravel.

bust (E 'finish, destroy, bankrupt); **croak, croaks** (E *croak* 'die'); **strakes** To lose all your marbles to a more successful player; to win all someone's marbles.

butards, buttards, butters, buttereds (? Fr. *boutarde* 'outburst') To pay a small fee, lose a turn, or lose a marble, in order to enter or re-enter a game, usually having to add something to the ring if the marble FATS.

cannon shot A shot in which you hit two opponents' marbles due to the TAW rebounding off the first to hit the second.

chinks (TEC 'to be stingy' < E *chink* 'small piece') To move closer to the ring in exchange for losing a shot; to delay, to cheat.

cog (E 'to beat, strike) To hit a marble with the TAW.

croaks See BUST.

cup and knucks See UP ON KNUCKS.

dab See BRAPS.

digs in When one marble is pushed slightly into the ground to make a hole to make the marble difficult to dislodge.

digs out When one marble is DIGS IN and the opponent tries to hit it with his marble hard enough to dislodge it from the hole.

dirt shake; shakes Advantage asked for by a player before his turn to allow him to be awarded points even though he has missed his target, because he has struck the dirt near the target, which may cause it to shake.

dooskoo To stay in place with no option to move out of an unfavorable location See DOO-SCREW MILLION DOWN.

dust See BRUSH.

ex (E *extend, extension*); **gabs, gambi, gamby, garb, garbie** (?E *gambit*); **span, spawn** (E *span* 'hand width'); **ex-span** The distance from thumb to last (little) finger--sometimes to second (forefinger). The TAW can be advanced this distance to improve the shooting position. The thumb is used as a pivot for a circle, drawing the resulting circumference as the boundary of the EX; pitching is permitting from any point on this line.

gabs, gambi, gamby, garb See EX.

galay (?E *dally*) To "loiter" around the ring, moving to get into better position to aim at a particular target.

go down In a hole game, hole 3 is at the BOUNCE, followed by hole 2 and hole 1. Holes must be potted in order: 1-2-3-2-1-2-3. The direction of play 1-2-3 is referred to as GOING DOWN.

go up In a hole game, hole 3 is at the BOUNCE, followed by hole 2 and hole 1. Holes must be potted in order: 1-2-3-2-1-2-3. The direction of play 3-2-1 is referred to as GOING UP.

hand-dab For HAGARSEE a move in which you pick up the opponent's losing marble, which is held in one hand and hit with the TAW to LICK or DAB it away into the PISS. To do this the marble has to have ended up within a SPAN of the hole he was attempting to pot.

heads To play by standing directly over the opponent's marble and holding one's marble between thumb and forefinger, usually in front of one open eye, and dropping it on the other marble. This position may only be used if the opponent's marble is very near the player's. In some areas it is only done in deciding the player sequence at the BOUNCE before the game starts.

hit; tap To hit an opponent's marble with one's own.

kaks, caks, cax, kacks, kax, kak, cack, kack (< sound of two marbles hitting each other forcefully) *v* To give an opponent's marble a good solid hit, as in "I kaks him!" *intj* The sound of a solid hit, as in "I hit him kaks!"

king dooz Any BUTTARDS DOOZ or marble that is MATCHED.

lele, lae-lae, lay-lay (TEC *lele* 'to screw, twist, spin, swizzle') To pitch closer and closer to the ring with each turn, or to PITCH the marble with spin to make it stop where it falls.

lerkee A point received in the game of LERKEE for knocking a target out of the ring.

lick out (TEC 'to hit and break or push away') To hit or strike an opponent's marble out of the ring.

match To put one's marble near the ring and in front of a DOOZ to facilitate hitting it with the next turn. This can only be done for BUTTARDS.

plumb dab See ZOP.

pot To pitch a marble into a hole.

puks, pucks, puksay To pitch so forcefully that the hand moves forward from the spot on which one is supposed to play.

raff (TEC *raff* 'to steal, snatch, grab' < Fr. *rafler* 'sweep off, carry off') To grab all the marbles madly in a scramble.

shakes See DIRT SHAKES.

shut (? A type of hit) "Your share in the ring is three, and if you dab or shut a man, you would entitle to take out three marbles out of the ring" (Banyan, 1985).

span, spawn See EX.

strakes See BUST.

stands See UPS.

tap See HIT.

tips, tip To slightly hit a marble, to register a hit, but not disturb its position, or to slightly move the marble and carry it along with you, to continue to use each HIT or TIPS to continue your turn. At every turn you are allowed to take a SPAN from the edge of the hole or from the position of your marble when it comes to rest. You replay until you either miss or hit the marble entirely out of the ring.

up on knucks; cup and knucks Formation of the non-playing hand into a fist from which the player shoots.

ups; stands; ups-stand To stand up and pitch the marble down from the hand when you say UPS or STANDS.

zop; braps; plumb dab To hit at the end of a curved trajectory without the shooter touching the ground.

Evaluations

Baj (TEC *Baj* < *Bajan* < *Barbadian*, reputation of Bajan cricketers as accurate bowlers, thus, anyone who can hit targets well) An expert marbles player, accurate pitcher.

fowl knucks; fufu knucks Used to describe a person who holds the hand in an incorrect or awkward position while pitching.

fufu knucks See FOWL KNUCKS.

knucks in, knucks een Said when a player's aim is very accurate, as in "Yuh knucks in, boy."

knucks out Said when a player's aim is not very accurate.

Penalties

The loser in a marbles game may suffer loss or deliberate destruction of his marbles, even his taw. There may also be physical penalties. The most common is *bokee* (*bokey*, *boki*, *bokie*), also known as *bo-knucks*, *martee* (*marti*), *mataks*, *noko*, and *progo*. The winner either snaps a finger hard against the loser's fingers or knuckles, or pitches the marble against the knuckles of the loser's closed fist. *Fat pork* is a swelling resulting from receiving bokee, from the resemblance to the small fruit, *Chrysobalanus icaco*, with this common name.

When a particular game is organized, an agreement is made, or *cut for*, on what the prizes and penalties will be. The loser must *come for* the penalty and submit to it, or successfully pot the hole, at which point the penalty is said to be *cut*.

> If marbles were scarce, you could play with buttons, and your shooter of course, or play for "bokie" where you returned your winnings, but the loser would submit to placing his closed fist on the ground, knuckles down, and the winner would pitch his taw against the joints of one's fingers for five or ten or however many "bokies" were bet or "cut for."

In hole games, before the game players may *cut for hagarsee*, making an agreement about the penalty to the loser, for instance ten bokee. In another common hagarsee penalty, possibly more common in South, each winning player can take an ex from the rim of the hole nearest to the point where the loser's marble has stopped and try to hit it away from the hole, from which point the loser once more has to attempt to pot the hole. The object is to hit the loser's marble hard enough to break it, and in the case of a hand dab to make it land in the *piss*, a hole filled with mud and urine. Having endured this penalty from all the winners, the loser then can *cut hagarsee*, indicating that the penalty has been paid and the contract is now finished, by linking little fingers with an opponent and "cutting" them apart with the downward slash of an open palm (a gesture also used in adult betting).

Although some penalties carry obvious humiliation—for instance putting someone's marble *in the piss*—most involve loss of marbles, or physical blows. Such penalties are not exactly a badge of honor, in that they indicate a (temporary) lack of skill at winning. Nonetheless, the ability to withstand bokee is a source of some respect: "Yu see dese knuckles? Is bokey I stan' have dem look so" (Keens-Douglas, 1975, p. 43).

Marbles in Social Context

Cultural Influences

The immediate source of most of the marbles games and terms played in T&T is the U.K. This is hardly surprising, given the overall impact of British colonial culture on the country. It is possible that there is some French influence, through the French planters, and there appears to be some specific relationship to games from India (*lerkee*) and Africa (*zip-zap-zapat/blochay*). There was no tendency to link marbles with Chinese immigrants, although they brought or were associated with many adult gambling games. There is virtually no influence from the United States, despite the fact that most 20th century machine-made marbles probably came from the U.S.

Lexical Metaphor

Like cricket terms in British and Caribbean English, and baseball terms in the U.S., but to a much lesser extent, some marbles terms are found outside the game context. One term originally from marbles known in most varieties of English is to *knuckle down* 'to get down to work, become serious.' (To *lose one's marbles* 'to go mad, crazy' is of unclear derivation, but apparently related to the game.)

A small number of words which apparently originated in marbles are used in other contexts. *Kaks* can indicate any kind of overwhelming, quick victory, as in "I get him, cax!," "I cark him, man!" To say "Mi knucks een" (interpreted either as 'my knucks are in' or 'I am knucksing') means not only to be shooting well, but to be successful or have a run of good luck: "Mi knucks in, and ah kyaan lose

today." Similarly, someone whose knucks are often in, or who is skillful at something, can be called *baj*: "I is a baj today!" In marbles, *right through, rings, and taws* refers to claiming the right to keep anything you hit, to win everything, to overwhelmingly defeat your opponents. By extension, this can mean to do something thoroughly and forcefully, to do a proper job on, to devastate. It is often sexual in reference, as in "I move right through she, rings and taws."

A number of terms have specialized marbles meanings but appear to have come from more widespread general terms. People can *chinks* with a drink by not putting in enough rum; a thief can *raff* a chain from your neck. The *bombay* or *plumbay* usually refers to the female pubic mound. The concept of *fen* is also known otherwise in the common childhood cry of *fen-half* (or *h-half*), to reserve the right to a half share, usually of food.

Socialization

Games are widely recognized as an important way in which children learn to function in adult society. Cave (1976) has urged further study of children's games in the Caribbean in regard both to social learning—for example manipulation of subordinate and superordinate roleplaying, concepts of honesty and fair play, and resistance to adult pressure—and the learning and maintenance of linguistic skills in Guyanese Creole.

Girls and boys are generally differentially socialized into games, especially as they become somewhat older. Explanations for differences have ranged from the physical—females are too weak for sport—to the social, for instance the view that sports are for training future soldiers (Lever, 1978, p. 480). Girls are also usually expected to contribute more to household chores, particularly indoor tasks, and are supervised more closely.

Like most boys' games, marbles are played "either for the express purpose of winning property ...from a less fortunate or skilful player, or to attain individual distinction" (Gomme 1898, pp. II:460–461). Girls' games, on the other hand, tend to have less explicit goals, tend to be governed more by ritual than rules—prescriptions are minimal, disputes comparatively rare—and to focus more on turn-taking and continuous play than on winning and losing. Boys "grant much more importance to being proclaimed the winner; they virtually always structure their games ... so that the outcomes will be clear and definite" (Lever, 1978, p. 479). Sports such as cricket, baseball, and football, involving organized teams, are governed by broad sets of rules covering a wide variety of situations, both common and rare; areas of ambiguity which demand rule elaboration and adjudication are built into these games.

For boys who are serious marbles players, the skills that such play fosters are an important part of their socialization. At one level, playing marbles is a way of forming and bonding friendships based on competition, competence, and respect for physical and strategic skills. Two key features typical of boys' games in general, obvious in marbles, are: (a) a war-like nature, that is, an emphasis on loss and destruction beyond winning and losing, including punishment by the infliction of physical pain; and (b) an intricate and constantly shifting elaboration of rules (discussed above).

The war-like nature of boys' games, and the metaphorical similarity of game pieces and weapons, are striking, as in a typical baseball headline: "Glavine's bat, arm kills Cubs" (*Southern Illinoisan*, May 14, 1991). Often the objective of games is clearly stated as the destruction of the article with which the opponent plays. For example, in British conkers, played with chestnuts on a string, the losing nuts are those broken by being hit by the winners.

> The successful nut ... has the merit and glory of having destroyed previously successful nuts ...the destruction of the implements of the game ...does materially increase his importance ... especially in the days when these articles were comparatively much more expensive than now, or ... [required] the making of another implement. (Gomme, 1898, p. II:471)

An American player makes the comparison explicit.

> The stricter rules apply generally to ... shooters' or gamblers' games, that is, the circle games. In these—though one might be playing with a friend—the aim is to wipe him out, take all his marbles, drub him, defeat him, humble him, send him home without his shooter. It's war in agate, and naturally one doesn't give an inch here, a relaxation of rules there. That's not done. (Ferretti, 1973, p. 60)

Not all boys are willing to go this far, however:

> War—that's rings. I eh play that. You play that, you doh attach to anything, because as soon as you like one special marble, somebody will mash it up.

The widespread English war metaphors for argument (e.g., Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 81) and sports are carried over into male-dominated arenas such as politics and business.[6] (Conversely, real wars, are spoken of in terms of games, e.g., "the game of war," and it would have been easy to confuse talk about the 1991 Persian Gulf War with talk about Nintendo.) While it is simplistic to equate training in child play as directly responsible for adult behavior, games clearly serve a socializing function. Lever (1978, p. 481) has suggested that typical boys' games may better equip males for occupational milieux that share structural features with these games, such as male-dominated, hierarchical, highly competitive bureaucracies, organizations, businesses, and armies.

Such emphasis on rules and war often leads to a highly developed code of honor:

> The ability to play within and abide by the rules was of paramount importance. If for instance the game was "pitching" or marbles, over stepping the "bounce" or "bringsing" were not allowed. The practice of "chinksing" was considered cowardice and on no account were "raffing" and "paid" permitted. In fact, the discovery of any such action led to uncontrollable anger and "heave" ['vocal encouragement to fight']. The emphasis was on fair play and the slightest deviation brought instantaneous judgment. (*Express* [Trinidad and Tobago], Aug 9, 1987, p. 6)

As Lever (1978, p. 481) points out, players in such games learn to deal with interpersonal competition in a forthright manner. Boys experience face-to-face confrontations, often opposing a close friend, and must learn to depersonalize the attack. They must practice self-control and sportsmanship. Players must learn to deal with the loss of valued possessions, either by refusing to risk, by having a fast tongue, or by learning to go away and lick their wounds and return to fight another day.

> When you play with the same people repeatedly, and lose repeatedly, the sometime humiliation of losing becomes pure shame ... But most players were not losers always ... the best players are those who can accept both good days and bad with equanimity. (Ferretti, 1973, p. 62)

The language of marbles games can also be seen within an overall pattern of gender-linked discourse. As Tannen (1990) has shown, many men engage the world

> as an individual in a hierarchical social order in which [they are] either one-up or one-down ... conversations are negotiations in which people try to achieve and maintain the upper hand if they can, and protect themselves from others' attempts to put them down and push them around. Life, then, is a contest, a struggle to preserve independence and avoid failure ... [Many women, however, approach the world] as an individual in a network of connections ... conversations are negotiations for closeness in which people try to seek and give confirmation and support, and to reach consensus. They try to protect themselves from others' attempts to push them away. Life, then, is a community, a struggle to preserve intimacy and avoid isolation. Though there are hierarchies in this world too, they are hierarchies more of friendship than of power and accomplishment. (pp. 24–25)

For girls, talking is a glue of intimacy that makes them friends. For boys, activities are more central; they play in larger, more hierarchical groups, and are "expected to use language to seize center stage by exhibiting their skill, displaying their knowledge, and challenging and resisting challenges" (Tannen, 1991, p. B3).

The Decline of Marbles

There is no question that knowledge of marbles, games, and terms in T&T, even in rural and economically poor areas, has disappeared or atrophied substantially. Traditional children's games have been in decline not only in T&T, but throughout the developed and developing world. For marbles, this phenomenon was noticeable by the early 1950s in the U.S. (e.g., Cassidy, 1958), and about a decade later in T&T. Spontaneous or highly elaborated games are rare. Such loss is ascribed to various reasons. Dickson (1988, p. 102) notes for the U.S. (also true of much of T&T):

> It was something kids did together on their way home from school ... most kids don't walk to school anymore ... Others point to affluence and the lure of electronic after-school diversions.

(However, he also mentions the "theory of a shrinking supply of essential, hard-packed dirt, succumbing to asphalt and even to grass"—not a problem in T&T.)

> What has replaced pitch? What is life in the tropics today? It is an amalgam of Reeboks and Air Nikes and Nintendo and Ninja Turtles and *high school* and *summer holidays* and the Video Soul Top 20 Countdown and Rock in America and Sony Walkmans and Go-bots. Kids don't play pitch any more. Today, it is only in St Ann's [the mental hospital] that one can be said to have lost one's marbles. No one under 30 even knows what "pitch" means. (Pires, 1991)

There are shifts in the types of games played in T&T. On the one hand, there is the increased institutionalization and inclusiveness of team sports such as cricket and small-goal football, for both boys and girls. Basketball, in particular, has been seen as an important means of organization and cohesion for lower-class black players (Mandle & Mandle, 1988). On the other hand, in the middle class there is a yearning for, if not widespread access to, computer games and designer running shoes. This orientation reflects widespread factors such as global marketing, increased affluence, and the availability of more commercial games, within a (post-) modern cultural orientation that turns from the past and is attracted to the new, the conspicuously expensive, the American, the mechanical, the manufactured, the computerized, the televised, and the tie-in.

The loss of pitch is seen by many adult men now as deprivation of an integral part of one's "boy-days," which included "tops, pelting mango, catching bird, tiefing fruit and breaking biche ['skipping school']." The socialization this entailed is recognized explicitly, as in a memoir about life in Belmont, Port of Spain: "It was a place where 'Boy Days' meant the capacity to enjoy life, where 'Boy Days' were given the credit for almost all skills acquired in later life" (Bynoe, 1985, p. vi).

Marbles, including explicitly their specialized lexicon, were seen as a concrete symbol of national cultural unity and integrity:

> When I was a boy we used to play pitch for hours under the guava tree in the Nantons' back yard. And, for all that it was played in the dirt with street rabs who came over the fence ... it was the most sophisticated game I ever played. This was a game that was not content to have only a specialised set of rules and regulations. This was a game that evolved its own vocabulary. There is—used to be—a complete lexicon around the game of pitch that is being lost. There were words—such as the inimitable *pooksay*—that existed only for and in the game of pitch. This may be a greater cultural loss than the decline of pan in Carnival ... Pitch also cut across all barriers: street rabs played against doctor's children and anywhere you went, from Carenage to Chaguanas, you could get a game of Hundred Hole or *leerkey*. (Pires, 1991)

What has happened to the verbal socialization associated with marbles remains to be investigated.

Conclusions

This paper has presented all terms associated with marbles games played in Trinidad and Tobago known to the authors. Approximately 190 are documented, compared with perhaps more than 700 for the U.S. Although many terms are synonyms and variants, it is still an impressive number. Most marble terminology in T&T is derived from British English terms, themselves often of considerable historical marbles depth; there are also indications of possible Indian and African influence. Marbles terms thus represent a significant linguistic and cultural continuity, with local terms supporting creole identity.

For (former) players, the use of the terms, particularly in contexts outside of marbles, is a powerfully affective in-group marker. The linguistic and social skills learned in their marbles playing have had an influence beyond the immediate fun of a childhood game. As an archetypal boys' game, marbles provided a context for learning "masculine" modes of skill, interaction, and discourse styles. In the contemporary era, it is not clear where such socialization has gone. Perhaps it remains the same but is attached to other activities, or perhaps it has itself shifted because of changes in childhood activities and goals of socialization.

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Notes

1. Such marbles, used from the early 1870s into the 1940s, were part of a closure device for "Codd" bottles used for carbonated beverages. Clear, azure, black, or translucent light green in color, they are distinguished by the presence of a mold mark or line around their circumference (Randall & Webb, 1988, p. 24).

2. Although most metal marbles were actual ball bearings, some hollow steel marbles, distinguished by an X where the metal was folded together to make a sphere, were produced in the early 1900s (Randall & Webb 1988, p. 30).

3. A game known in the U.K. and U.S. as *hogo* or *ship-sail* (Gomme, 1898, pp. II:191–192; Ferretti, 1973, p. 114) is sometimes classified as a marbles game, but was played in T&T, under the latter name, only with grains of corn (Inniss, 1932, p. 26). A number of marbles (or grains) is held in a closed fist by one player, who says, "Ship sail, sail fast. How many men on board?" A guess is made by his opponent; if less he has to give as many marbles as will make up the true number, if more, as many as he said over. Should the guess be correct he takes them and starts over in turn (or eats the captured grains).

4. Strategies for being wary of fens in both marbles and the rest of life were parallel: If you had cut "fen half" for example, that gave your co-cutters the right to claim half of anything nice you had to eat simply by their calling "fen half." So you had to be always on the alert, because the only way to avoid having to share your spoils was to beat them to the punch by shouting "fen-no-half!" (Araujo, 1984)

5. A tactic for which thus far a name has not been found is done for luck or to increase accuracy: "A secondary taw is kept in the other hand and rapped sharply at least twice before the shot is made, almost like chalking a cue in billiards. Some players make a noise with their mouths, like 'giddyapping' a horse—two short cheups ['suck teeth']."

6. A typical example of cut-throat business dealing with a marbles metaphor is found in a popular American novel (Resnicow, 1987, p. 178): "Aside from the honor and the glory, there could be a tremendous financial gain ... He would, of course, lose everything he had in [the company], but it might be worth it ... But how would he prove this without showing the papers that Kassel signed? We could take all his marbles for that."

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